

To sum up, the last two tables show that though the age of the mother at the birth of the first child has tended to fall, on the average the parents have been married longer at the birth of the first child.

The above discussion has been concerned chiefly with intermaritally conceived children. The problem of illegitimacy can be considered under two headings—extra-maritally born and extra-maritally conceived. In 1933, 32·40 per cent. of the total first births were extra-maritally conceived—that is, the children were either born out of wedlock or born within seven months of marriage. This figure fell to 24·64 per cent. in 1938, and to 18·61 per cent. in 1941. It had risen to 23·84 per cent. in 1943. Children born within seven months of marriage were 17·34 per cent. of all first births in 1938, and 11·83 per cent. in 1943. Children conceived and born out of wedlock were 10·94 per cent. of all first births in 1938, and 15·77 per cent. in 1943.

No adequate statistics of recent date as to the size of families are available. The following table, giving the only figures available, shows a trend which has continued since the last date in the table.

Table No. 15.—Table showing the Average Number of Children born and living in each Family in New Zealand in 1911–16–21

Year.				Average Number of Children born.	Average Number of Children living.
1911	..	..	..	3·48	3·02
1916	..	..	..	3·21	2·85
1921	..	..	..	2·99	2·68

An approach to this problem can be obtained by analysing the previous issue of mothers who had children in the years mentioned. In 1938 the average total issue of mothers who had children in that year was 2·41; in 1939, 2·33; in 1940, 2·30; in 1941 2·29; in 1943, 2·56. In 1915, the earliest year for which statistics are available, the figure was 3·11. This falling trend is an indication of a fall in the size of families. The rise in 1943 is related to the lower marriage rates at this period and the consequent fall in first births.

(2) THE DEATH-RATE

An analysis of the birth-rate on its own, however, does not give a true picture of the capacity of the country to maintain its population. The question of change in the death-rate must also be considered in this connection. The following table gives an indication of the death-rates from 1871 to 1945:—

Table No. 16.—Table showing at each Five Years the Death-rate per 1,000 from 1871 to 1945

1871	..	..	10·13	1921	..	..	8·73
1876	..	..	12·66	1926	..	..	8·74
1881	..	..	11·13	1931	..	..	8·35
1886	..	..	10·45	1936	..	..	8·75
1891	..	..	10·35	1941	..	..	9·84
1896	..	..	9·10	1942	..	..	10·60
1901	..	..	9·81	1943	..	..	10·04
1906	..	..	9·31	1944	..	..	9·87
1911	..	..	9·39	1945	..	..	10·07
1916	..	..	9·64				